

HOTEL

HARBOUR

VIEW

HOTEL HARBOUR VIEW

Story by Susumu Ishikawa

Art by Jiro Taniguchi

Translation/Covered poem & Main Title

Book by Art and Lettering/Ed. Japan

Cover Design/Via Graphics

Editors/Jiro Taniguchi & Susumu Ishikawa

Executive Editor/Jiro Taniguchi

Publisher/Mountain Ops

© Susumu Ishikawa/Jiro Taniguchi 1999

English Version © Via Communications Japan, Inc. 1999

Also published by Panache, Inc. in Japan

Hotel Harbour View is a trademark of Via Communications, Inc.

All rights reserved. No unauthorized reproduction allowed.

Names, characters, and incidents in this publication are

entirely fictional. Printed in Japan

Published by Via Communications, Inc.

P.O. Box 17036, San Francisco, CA 94117

ISBN 1 555 43 21

First Printing October 1999

H O T E L
STORY BY NATSUD SEKIKAWA

H A R B O U R
ART BY JIROH TANIGUCHI

V I E W
VIZ SPECTRUM EDITIONS

Episode 1	Hotel Harbour View	5
Episode 2	Brief Encounter — Act One	45
	Act Two	69

Death checks

into the Hotel Harbour View 94

by Fred Burke

Episode 1
HOTEL HARBOUR VIEW



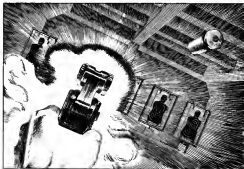
thp ●

9

thp ● ● ●

thp

9





DE HONORARIUM GELLET, MURDER
STACY 210 WERDEN PER, SORROR.









THEY
NEVER
RESPECT THE
SIZE OF THE
SIGNAL. THEY JUST
DON'T
WANT ANY
BLINKING.



LOOK
AT THAT
BLOOF
STRAIGHT
OUT.

THAT
LITTLE BLINKING
LIGHT, AND
THE ONE ON
THE SIDE
OF THE NEXT
BUILDING. THOSE
ARE GUIDANCE
LIGHTS.
FOR
AIRPLANES.



THE WHOLE
CITY IS THE
AIRPORT.



IF
THEY
DON'T
FIND
THOSE
BLINK-
ING
LIGHTS...

THIS
PLANE
TAKES
OUT AN
OFFICE
BUILD-
ING.









TWENTY YEARS
AGO THEY CAME.
MORNING AND
NIGHT, BEAUTIFUL
WOMEN...
WHITE AND
EURASIAN...



ONCE SHIRLEY
MACLAINE FILCHED
ONE OF OUR
SILVER SWIZZLEKES.
ON PRESENTING HER
BILL, I SAID...

"MISS
MAC-
LAINE..."

"MISS
MACLAINE,"
I SAID...
"I HAVE
INCLUDED THE
COST OF THE
SWIZZLE STICK
IN YOUR
HANDS ON
THIS BILL.
WILL
THAT BE
CASH/AC-
TORY?"

TWEN-
TY
YEARS
AGO.



"HMM!
SOO-IN...
?"















IN THE
OLD DAYS...
WHEN
THE
HEAT WAS
ON
IN JAPAN...



...JAPAN
NEE DE
GAND-
STER'S
WOULD
RUN
HERE.

I
KNOW.



I SAW
ALL THOSE
OLD
ISHIHARA
AND KOBAYASHI
MOVIES.



THE MOVIES
ALL START
WHEN THEY
RETURN TO
JAPAN.



YEAH.



THIS
STORY'S
DIFFER-
ENT. IT
ENDS
BEFORE
THAT.



WHAT
WILL
YOU
DO
WITH
THE
PIC-
TURES?



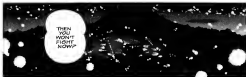
TONIGHT
I'LL LOOK
AT THEM...
ALONE.



THEN
I'LL
BURN
THEM.





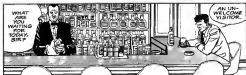












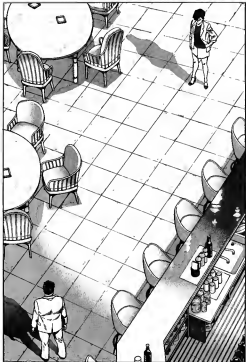




SID
PO















BLEPP











HE
WORKED AT
THE TRADE
MINISTRY
UNTIL
LAST YEAR.



HE WAS
JUST
A GUY
WHO
LIKED
GUNS.







HOTEL

STORY BY NATSUO SEKIKAWA

HARBOUR

ART BY JIROH TANIGUCHI

VIEW

VIZ SPECTRUM EDITIONS

Episode 2
BRIEF ENCOUNTER

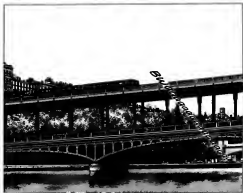
ACT ONE



JEROME CHARLES DE GUELLE, PARIS, WEDNESDAY, 2 PM













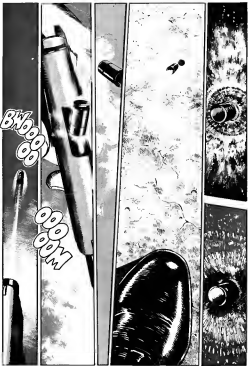
Ekoooooooooooo













oooooooooooooooooooo







LAST WEEK A MAN NAMED PASCAL WAS KILLED

BY HIM?

I WONDER HOW LONG HE'S BEEN BACK IN PARIS. HE SPENT SO LONG IN HIDING... IN MADAGASCAR... OUTROUT...



HE WAS THE SORT WHO KEPT A PARIS AIRFAR TICKET IN HIS POCKET... WHEREVER HE WAS.



NOW THAT HE'S SHOWN HIMSELF... WE HAVE TO REMOVE HIM.



WINE?



PASCAL VOLUNTEERED HE WAS A PROMISING YOUNG THING.



THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO KILL A LEGEND. NO DOUBT AND MAKE HIS OWN LEGEND.

LESS





HE WAS HOPE-
LESS.

I'M
THE
ONLY
ONE.



PLAY-
ING.



DO YOU
KNOW
WHERE
HE'S
STAY-
ING?



A HOTEL
IN RENNES
HE'S
WORKING
AT AN
INSURANCE
AGENCY
IN
BASTILLE.

ON
STAFF
FOR



NIGHT
WATCHMAN.
MIDNIGHT
TO
EIGHT.

LINE
FOUR FROM
SAINT
DULPICE.



CHANGE
AT
CHATELET
TO LINE
ONE...

RRRBOARR

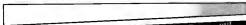














SHHHHHH





Episode 2
BRIEF ENCOUNTER

ACT TWO







DO
YOU SEE
THE
WOMAN?

WITH
THE
CRUTCH.



THAT'S
HIS
LOVER.

HIS
LOVER...



OUR
REPORTS
LINKED
HER TO HIM
BEFORE
HE DIS-
APPEARED.

HIS
LEG
WASN'T
BUT
THEAT.



SHE'S
FRENCH,
ISN'T
SHE?
PARISIENNE.

HOW
CAN YOU
TELL?





















MONDAYS 1430 THE BLUE HOUR, SAINT-DENIS STATION









IT
WAS
SUMMER
IN
MANILA.



DID
YOU
REMEM-
BER
MANILA?



LOOK
AT
MY
LEGS.



YOU
SAID I
HAD
GOOD
LEGS.



AT THE
HOTEL, ON
THE BEACH
IN PUERTO
AZUL.







MA
B
IK
O!!

NEVER
FORGET

BAMMM



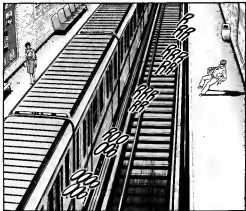
THAT
WE
WERE
IN
LOVE.

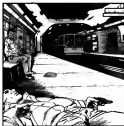
BAMMM

BAMMM

BAMMM







END OF THE WORLD.





DEATH CHECKS IN TO THE HOTEL HARBOUR VIEW

by Fred Burke

In October, *Death Checks In* to the *Hotel Harbour View*, an *Wink* unique Spectrum line presents its second title, another foray out of the manga mainstream and into the depth and breadth of Japanese storytelling. This strangely compelling album of two stories mean sex and death in intriguing proportions—and leaves us wondering at the similarities between prostitute and assassin, kim and gunshot wound.

Hotel Harbour View is writer Naotake Sekikawa and artist Joichi Terauchi's spirited homage to the hard-boiled detective fiction and film noir of the late forties and fifties, a time when American popular culture took a turn toward the dark, a time when the dirty underbelly of our society gave inspiration to some of the hardest working stylists in fiction and film. Japan followed suit in the sixties with *yakusa* films of intense gangster violence, and in France many film-makers of the New Wave paid their respects to the growing international genre. *Hotel Harbour View* sinks its foundation firmly in this tradition.

From there, however, Sekikawa and Terauchi build something new, a meditation on death that seems, on the surface, to deal with style more than substance. After all, the female assassins of these stories make it clear that their services are available to anyone with the cash. For one of these women killing a man she once loved presents only minor emotional obstacles. Yet in each of these brief

tales we are forced to look carefully at a man's final moments, and in the end we are left wondering if anything can truly be more intimate a symbol of one's life than one's death.

In the title story, "Hotel Harbour View," we are drawn to the parallels between the protagonist's elaborate direction of a prostitute as he photographs her masturbating and his similar choreographing of his own demise: sex and death, devoid of spontaneity, but acted through with a style unique to their context. "Final Encounter," the second story, takes us deeper into the psychology of our assassin, forced to kill not only a man she once had an affair with, but more importantly, the man who taught her how to shoot a gun. It is a difficult assignment for her to complete, but not as all for the reasons one might believe.

And here is where Sekikawa can be justifiably proud of his achievement. Both of these stories teed on dangerous moral ground, both appear, at first glance, to be ludicrously simplistic little snuff tales. But in the most eloquently simple terms, Sekikawa helps us understand why a man would want to engineer his own assassination, how memory of a love long lost can pull the trigger on death's revolver.

Sekikawa's prose is stark, and in page after page of context he allows the action to speak for itself. *Hotel Harbour View* is full of incredible sequences that rely on sequential art's

ability to slow time to a virtual standstill—a state which would be boring if we weren't entranced by the odd ballet of bullet, assassin, and victim, the dance of death. *Hotel Harbour View* also serves up some exotic locales; Terauchi helps us to revel in Hong Kong's night skyline and the Paris subway system. The title character in which we pass our days is given its due: a bartender's comments about the good old days, a woman deftly turns a stir against her Persian employer. Death, Sekikawa seems to say, has both its place and its time.

This tight-lined control of pacing, the goal-orientedness of story, is so deft, so accomplished, that we are pulled along without noticing it. In much the same way, Terauchi's art works across the story rather than grandstanding. Filled with the levels of depth and gory tones that have come to characterize "good" black and white manga art in the States, Terauchi's art relies on a gritty cross-hatching style to keep the intricate Zipatone patterns from becoming

ing "sterile." It is a technique that works, in spades.

Hotel Harbour View is not for the casual reader. Its sexual content is matter of fact, and the book remains focused on the minutiae of death rather than heated fight scenes. But there is more to the comic medium than just the action sequences and melodrama that seems to characterize so much of mainstream comics, both here and in Japan, and digging beneath the surface of Sekikawa and Terauchi's work has its own rewards.

Final Death is the artist of *The Black Lagoon*, *Scraped Rust*, *Secret Army*, and the cover page. Also work for *Blackboard* or *Blackboard* of *Shonan*, *Fun of the Month*, *Star*, *Black*, and the current series *Blackboard* *Star* *High*.



JIROH TANIGUCHI

Jiroh Taniguchi was born in 1947 in Tokyo, Japan. After his high school graduation, he became an assistant to a professional comic artist, Kiyohiko Sekikawa. In 1968, in 1978 he met Naotaro Kikuchi and together they created Unprotected City and Rukin, two unique series that engendered a new style in Japanese comic storytelling. His other major works include Trouble Is My Business, a hard-boiled detective comic with a touch of humor, and The Age of Boobies. Part 1 & Part 2, a compilation of biographies of Japanese literary greats from the turn of the century. Both these stories were written by Sekikawa. Though Taniguchi has written credits himself, since is the story of a historic super-day escape, from Russia and traveling across Alaska and Canada.

NATSUO SEKIKAWA

Mr. Komatsu is honoring the request from Mr. Sekikawa that his profile not be included in this book.